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THEY GUARDED THE CITY

Old Forts Around Washington Are Rapidly Disappearing.

HELD ENEMY IN CHECK

Early Would Have Entered the Capital Had He Not Considered the Defenses Too Strong.

Off north of the old military road from Brightwood to Fort Reno and just east of the Chevy Chase line stands a number of persimmon trees up a guich, on the side of a steep hill. Beyond the trees, outlined against the sky, appear the square lines of

a steep hill. Beyond the trees, outlined against the sky, appear the square lines of a battlement of some sort.

The attention of the curious passer is at once attracted and many a visitor has gone up to see what is at the crest of the hill. It is a long climb up the steep hill-side, barren of everything but broom sage, but the view from the top alone will repay it. The square lines belong to an earthwork, put there in the days wheneverybody was a little nervous at times for fear, in some way, Lee's army might getlinto Washington and the friends of the Union, with their government, be forced to go out. In other words it was a part of the stroghbold called Fort be Russy, and coasisted of four walls of earth about ten feet high originally. These were set on the very crest of the conical rise that formed the hilltop. The walls were about 100 feet on each side, and at the comers were irregularities of outline that marked the position of cannon placed so as to lave a wide range.

GRASS GROWING ON THE RAMPARTS.

Now there is left only an overgrown ram-part, with slight irregularities at the corpers and depressions at points where extra pen were mounted. Pine and oak and other non were mounted. Pine and oak and other trees straggie up the outer bank and over the wall down into the center of the inclosed space, as men might have met in conflict thirty years ago. There is a tangle of grasses at the bottom, and in one corner is a thrifty young cherry tree in recognition of the fact that swords have been turned into pruning books. The place makes a picturesque corner in one of the most picturesque parts of Rock Creek Park. It may some day have a little attention paid to the preservation of its lines, and so be retained for the artist's pencil and for the sight. for the artist's pencil and for the sight-seer of a hundred years from now. It is one of the few points about Washington where the footprints of war linger unmis-takably.

The movement for the circumvallation of

The movement for the circumvaliation of the capital was begun a little more than thirty-five years ago, May 23, 1861. On that day Major Wood went by way of the Aqueduct Bridge, Major Heintzelman, afterward general, by Long Bridge, and Col. Elisworth by water to Alexandria, all to take up a position on the sacred soil of Virginia and make fortifications to protect Washington, Carl D. P. Woodbury, aid. 2 Virginia and make fortifications to protect Washington. Capt. D. P. Woodbury, aided by Lieut. O. E. Cross, had charge of the en-gineering operations at Aqueduct Bridge. Capt. B. S. Alexander with Lieut. F. E. Frime at Jackson City, and Capt. H. G. Wright, a volunteer, was sent by Gen. Mans-field, who seems to have been in chief com-mand, to select the points for making the forts.

At that time, it is stated, that the officers of the army - even those who had spent much of their time at Washington and New York—were a great deal better acquainted with the approaches to Paris than they were with the country surrounding this city. It had been made a part of their education, and after reading to know what had been done abroad in modern fertifications for great centers of population, nearly all were familiar with the general lines of the works

great centers of population, nearly all were familiar with the general lines of the works for the protection of Paris and other foreign capitals. Nothing at all had been done here and many even of those who had lived here for some time knew almost nothing of the lay of the country in this vicinity. Sites' were chosen at once for Fort Runyon, near the south end of Long Bridge, on the hills near St. Asaph; Fort Corcoran, just back of Rosslyn, toward Arlington, and Fort Elisworth, at Alexandria. With Fort Corcoran were the auxiliary batteries known as Fort Bennett and Fort Haggerty, with a system of auxiliary batteries known as Fort Bennett and Fort Haggerty, with a system of blockhouses and rifle trenches around the head of the aqueduct Bridge, while Fort Runyon was supported by Fort Albany. Fort Ellsworth probably had flanking batteries placed along the elevations around Shuter's Hill, where it was located though no account of the fact has

FORTS OF LARGE SIZE These works were of large size, Fort Runyon being the most extensive single fortification ever attempted for the pro-tection of Washington. It was 1,500 feet around, while Fort Lyon, next in size, was 934 feet, and Fort Marcy, 736 feet. The works ranged from this down to 150 feet.

The work of construction occurred about two months, though it was counted that these first forts were done in seven weeks and they were sooner than that actually occupied by a defensive force. It had been found at once upon the location of Fort Runyon that something must be done to give the Union forces the command of the heights of Arlington, and Fort Albany was located alongside the Columbia turopike so as to command that approach to the

and to hold Arlington It was not thought that these works would be of much consequence in case of an attack by a force of the enemy coming flushed with victory on the battlefield. It was not expected that any such thing could pen. Yet it was only a short tin Bull Run had been fought and the Confederates swept up in pursuit of the demoralized Union forces almost to the gates of Washington.

ENEMY AFRAID TO ADVANCE

There can be no doubt that the reports of these fortified positions deterred the commanders of the enemy from attempting to seize the city, but contemporary writers attribute the safety of Washington in that perilous hour rather to the exhausted condition of the Confederate army than to the obstacles they would have met at the obstacles they would have met at the forts if they had attempted to storm the city. As a matter of fact they were nearly as hadly cut up as were the Union troops, and they might have been driven in the other direction almost as casily as their opponents were in this.

The lesson of Bull Run was that the city needed a much more complete system o fortifications. Large functies with stock aded garges were built, connecting the forte already crected and Forts Craig, Tilling-hast, Cass, Woodbury, and one or two others were located to connect the forts at Aqueduct Bridge with those at Long at Aquetuct Bridge with those at Long Bridge. Battery Cameron, with two rifted forty-two pounders, was located as an out-post. Fort Scatt was erected on the wooded ridge north of and parallel to Four Mile Run, and about two hundred acres of wood

cut down so as to give range to the canno LOCATION OF THE FORTS Fort Richardson was built a little south and east of the Columbia turnpike, flanking works on Mount Ida and the adjacent the Arlington lines. Fort Scott and Fort Ellsworth were connected by a series of heights. Fort Reynolds was located and Fort Worth and Fort Ward were begun about September 1, to connect with Force Craig and Richardson and Fort Barnard

Craig and Richardson and Port Barnard was built between Reynolds and Richardson, so as to command Four Mile Run and flank the deep transverse ravines.

The building of forts on this side of the river next lengaged the attention of the officers. Fort Lyon was begun by Gen. Newton about September 15, but already Fort Pennsylvania, afterward Fort Renchad been located and ground broken for it in August on the heights of Tenleytown This was supported by the construction of FortGaines, which would exclude the cump from the region between the Potomac and Rock Creek. Then Forts Stevens, Tottes and Slocum were built out on the Beventlastreet road beyond Brightwood and far around toward the Anacostia River back of Koudall Green, was erected Fort Lincoln to over the Baithuore turnpike end the religion.

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and Tenleytown were built Forts De Rossy, Saratoga, Thayer and one or two others. Fort De Russy was located, as stated at the outset, in what is now Rock Creek Park. It held a commanding position, sweeping the valley of Rock Creek, and proved of great value when Early made his descent upon Washington in July, 1864, when success might have set back the end of the war for a year or more and cost the government millious of money and thousands of men.

West and south of Tenleytown were located Fort Summer and a series of supporting works along Powder Mill Run and beyond the reservoir. Works were constructed near Glen Echo and Great Falls to protect the water supply.

to protect the water supply.

On the other side of the Anacostia River (Eastern Branch) the fortifications began with Fort Mahan, near Benning, to protect the road along the river toward Pladens, burg. From this works were constructed along the great ridge extending by Union-town and Angestin. along the great ridge extending by Union-town and Anacostia toward Oxon Hill and called Fort Meigs, Fort Carroll, Fort Gre-ble and Fort Stanton. On that side also were placed Forts Dupont, Baker, Davis, Wagner, Ricketts and Snyder.

CHAIN OF DEFENSES.

The protection was deemed nearly com-plete when two mountain howitzers and some 8-inch and 32-pounders were located so asto command Chain Bridge. Gen. W.F. Smith later located and built Forts Ethan Alien and Marcy. One enumeration gives in all at that time 23 forts south of the Poin all at that time 23 forts south of the co-tomac, 14 forts and three batteries between the Potomac and the Anacostia, and 11 forts beyond the Anacostia. A later count made 53 forts and 22 batteries extending over a total line of 33 miles. Counting two men to the yard in front and one in the rear, these required for their defense 25,000 men. With three relays for each gun there would be needed in addition 9,000 artiflerymen to serve the caunon.

In all, these forts numbered 643 guns and 75 mortars. The cannon were mainly 24 and 32 pounders, with siege guns and rifed Parrott guns. They would be deened nowadays to constitute a very insufficient armament for any sort of defense. Most of the pieces have already been given away to Grand Army posts and military schools for purposes of ornament.

GUNS ARE SCATTERED.

GUNS ARE SCATTERED.

The disappearance of the forts that held them has kept pace with the scattering of the guns. Of the seventy-five earthworks enumerated by a commission empowered by Congress to report upon the fortifications of Washington, very few traces remain. Only an old resident here and there can point out a rapidity disappearing ridge at this point and that as part of Fort Corcoran, or Fort Runyon, Fort Stanton, of Fort Stevens. Fort Myer, so far as the records go, was not then in existence under any form or name, and Forts Foote and Washington were not counted among the immediate were not counted among the immediate

defenses of Washington.
On the heights south of Arlington village and just this side Nauck's station on the Southern Road can be found a series of ramparts, overgrown with young places. These are supposed to have been part of Fort Richardson. Through the pines run hog paths, and the ground seems to be unoccupied and unused.

REMINDER OF STIRRING SCENES. Near the center of the low lines of earth-work is an old breastwork with higher waits and a thriftier growth of trees, in-cluding other varieties with the pine. This, it is supposed, was the stronghold of the fortification.

On the north of the city stands a

on the bord of the cay stands are mournful reminder of those trying days, and marks the site of one of the series of fortresses. This is Fort Stevens Military Cemetery. Its entrance is within a few feet of the Brightwood car line, about a mile and a quarter beyond the postoffice, and just this side of Silver Springs. There are buried thirty-seven men killed in the right with Early, and for three years past the late Capt. Stephen W. Baxter had taken care of the grounds and watched over their remains. over their remains.

Their low green tents are spread, And glory guards in silent round The bivouac of the dead."

EARTHWORKS HAVE DISAPPEARED There is hardly a trace of the earth-works that were located there for the proworks that were located there for the pro-tection of the capital. Indeed a recent effort to locate any ridge or mound as part of Fort Stevens was wholly unsuccessful. Near Brightwood is a plowed field just to the right of the car tracks, which shows a ridge considered to be a part of Fort Stevens, but it would not be taken as a portion of an old fortification if it were not particu-

larly pointed out.

Yet completely as these old earthworks have gone from the face of the earth, they proved in their day the security of Wash-

On June 12, 1864, Lee ordered Early to take Ewell's corps of the Army of Northera Virginia, then lying at Gaines' Mill, at Cold Harbor, with two battalions of artillery and movedown the Shenandoah valley. He took Nelson's and Braxton's batteries with Gea. Long as chief of artiflery, and started at 3 o'clock next morning by way of Louisa Courthouse and Charlottesville; went through Swift's Gap in the Blue Ridge, struck Gen. Hunter in the rear and drove him out of the valley.

ON TO WASHINGTON.

He then received orders from Lee to cross the Potomac near Leesburg or at Harper's Ferry and threaten Washington. He was to co-operate with Gen. Breckinridge. Gen. Early has stated that when he started on his raid he had only 8,000 muskets under his command and they had been for the days in a continuous fight from the under his command and they had been for ten days in a continuous light from the Wilderness to Cold Barbor. Divisions had been reduced to brigades and brigades to regiments. As he moved into the valley he had Imboden, McCausiand, Jackson and Jones, with about 10,000 muskets. Be crossed the Potomac near Barper's Ferry about July 2, and on July 9 was at Frederick, where he was met by Gen. Wallace. With only about 3,400 men Gen. Wallace risked a battle, and, while defeated, delayed the Confederate force. Iwenty-four hours. This gave time for the Union troops to come up from Virginia and protect the capital.

and Storem were built out on the Beventle street road beyond Brightwood and far around toward the Anacostia River buck of Kondall Green, was erected Fort Lincoln to cover the Baithnore turnpike and the Fry. On July 11 McCausland's men came down the Georgetown pike from Rockville, while Imboden and others moved around to the north and marched in along the

the front and rode up in sight of Fort Stevens. He found the place practically have seized it if he could have brought up his forces at once. But while he was sit-ting there on his horse, out near Silver Springs, a cloud of dust arose in the rear of the fort toward Washington, and he realized that his chance to surprise Fort

CHECKED EARLY'S ADVANCE.

The Sixth and Nineteenth corps, of the Army of the Potomac, had sent reinforcements and Washington was safe. They marched through the city and out Seventh street road, arriving at 1:30 p. m., just in time to check Early's advance.

The next day occurred the only battle that was ever fought in the District, and the only fight during the whole war at which President Lincoln was present in

and his secretaries were active in advis

They made a motley crew, but moved to the front with apparent spirit and courage.

The Second Regiment of District of Columbia Volunteers; the Seventh Veteran Reserves, under Gen. Hardin; the first brigade of Veteran Reserves; the First Vermony Heavy Artillery, Ninth New York; Second Massichusetts; Eighth Illinois and others made up the force that manned the forts in Early's front next morning.

DEFENSES WERE STRONG. He had continued reconnoitering during the afternoon of his arrival. He found, he says an exceedingly strong defense, inclosed forts with heavy artillery, a tier of lower works in front pierced for an immense number of guns, covered by ditches and strengthened by abattis. Skirmishing and sharpshooting combined with reconnoitering were kep

combined with reconnoitering were kept up through the night.

A little before sundown, about 6 p. m., Gen. Frank Wheaton attacked the Confederates as they approached too near Fort Stevens. There was a sharp rattle of musketry and the booming of cannon. This drew the President and members of his Cabinet to the field, where they watched the engagement to its close. The Confederates were finally beaten off, but not till the Union loss was 280 killed and wanned the Union loss was 280 killed and wounded

hours' further search for a weak spot, where he might break through, gave it up and retreated into Virginia. He thought his command was outnumbered, and said in his report that a signal on the Soldiers' Home was sufficient to communicate with all the tropps in the intrenchments and concentrate them at the point of attack. He saw no reason to hope that an effort to storm the capital would prove successful.

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been no rain for weeks. The roads were full of dust and the movement of troops was very difficult. Early himself came to undefended and apparently could easily have seized it if he could have brought up

CHECKED EARLY'S ADVANCE.

which President Lincoln was present in person. Early had been checked, but there was the greatest apprehension all thatnight. Every available force was summoned to the front. Gen. Anson McD. McCook was placed in command. President Lincoln

ing operations.

Gen. M. C. Meigs, then quartermaster general, reorganized a troop of 2,000 men of his department, whom he had drilled considerably at the outbreak of the war.

HEAY GUNS WERE USED. In the fight the heavy guns at Fort De Russy as well as the armament at Fort Stevens were brought to bear in holding

Early was driven back from the farms of Mr. Rives and Mrs. Lay, and after several hours' further search for a weak spet,

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tervals of 15 minutes. No other of Washington's suburbs can claim greater advantages.

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